

trauma, we owe them greater access to mental health care at their schools.

We must finally hold social media companies accountable for the experiment they are running on our children for profit. It is time to pass bipartisan legislation to stop Big Tech from collecting personal data on our kids and teenagers online, ban targeted advertising to children, and impose stricter limits on the personal data these companies collect on all of us.

Third, let's do more to keep our Nation's one truly sacred obligation: to equip those we send into harm's way and care for them and their families when they come home; job training and job placement for veterans and their spouses as they return to civilian life; helping veterans afford the rent because no one should be homeless in America, especially someone who served the country.

Denis McDonough is here from the VA. We had our first real discussion when I asked him to take the job. I am glad he did. We were losing up to 25 veterans a day from suicide. Now we are losing 17 to the silent scourge of suicide. Seventeen veterans a day are committing suicide, more than all the people being killed in the wars.

Folks, the VA is doing everything it can, including expanding mental health screenings and a proven program that recruits veterans to help other veterans understand what they are going through and get them the help they need. We have to do more.

And fourth, last year, Jill and I reignited the Cancer Moonshot that I was able to start when President Obama asked me to lead our administration on this issue.

Our goal is to cut the cancer death rate at least by 50 percent in the next 25 years, turn more cancers from death sentences into treatable diseases, and provide more support for patients and their families. It is personal to so many of us, so many of us in this audience.

Joining us are Maurice and Kandice, an Irishman and a daughter of immigrants from Panama. They met and fell in love in New York City and got married in the same chapel as Jill and I got married in, in New York City. Kindred spirits.

He wrote us a letter about his little daughter, Ava, and I saw her just before I came over. She was just a year old when she was diagnosed with a rare kidney disease, cancer. After 26 blood transfusions, 11 rounds of radiation, 8 rounds of chemo, 1 kidney removed, she was given a 5 percent survival rate. He wrote how, in the darkest moments, he thought: If she goes, I can't stay.

Many of you have been through that, as well. Jill and I understand that, like so many of you. He read Jill's book describing our family's cancer journey and how we tried to steal moments of joy where we could with Beau.

For them, that glimmer of joy was the half smile from their baby girl. It meant everything to them. They never

gave up hope, and little Ava never gave up hope. She turns 4 next month. They just found out that Ava is beating the odds and is on her way to being cured of cancer. And she is watching from the White House tonight if she is not asleep already.

For the lives we can save and the lives we have lost, let this be a truly American moment that rallies the country and the world together and proves that we can still do big things.

Twenty years ago, under the leadership of President Bush and countless advocates and champions, we undertook a bipartisan effort through PEPFAR to transform the global fight against HIV/AIDS. It has been a huge success. He thought big. He thought large. He moved.

I believe we can do the same thing with cancer. Let's end cancer as we know it and cure some cancers once and for all.

Folks, there is one reason why we have been able to do all these things: our democracy itself. It is the most fundamental thing of all. With democracy, everything is possible. Without it, nothing is.

For the last few years, our democracy has been threatened and attacked and put at risk. It was put to the test in this very room on January 6.

And then, just a few months ago, unhinged by the big lie, an assailant unleashed political violence in the home of the then-Speaker of the House of Representatives, using the very same language the insurrectionists used as they stalked these Halls and chanted on January 6.

Here tonight in this Chamber is the man who bears the scars of that brutal attack but is as tough and strong and resilient as they get, my friend, Paul Pelosi.

Paul, stand up.

But such a heinous act should have never happened. We must all speak out. There is no place for political violence in America. We have to protect the right to vote, not suppress that fundamental right. Honor the results of our elections, not subvert the will of the people. We have to uphold the rule of law and restore trust in our institutions of democracy. And we must give hate and extremism in any form no safe harbor.

Democracy must not be a partisan issue. It is an American issue. Every generation of Americans has faced a moment where they have been called to protect our democracy, to defend it, stand up for it, and this is our moment.

My fellow Americans, we meet tonight at an inflection point, one of those moments that only a few generations ever face, where the direction we now take is going to decide the course of this Nation for decades to come.

We are not bystanders of history. We are not powerless before the forces that confront us. It is within our power of we the people. We are facing the test of our time. We have to be the Nation we have always been at our best: opti-

mistic, hopeful, forward-looking, a nation that embraces light over dark, hope over fear, unity over division, stability over chaos.

We have to see each other not as enemies but as fellow Americans. We are a good people, the only nation in the world built on an idea—the only one.

Other nations are defined by geography and ethnicity, but we are the only Nation based on an idea that all of us, every one of us is created equal in the image of God. A Nation that stands as a beacon to the world. A Nation in a new age of possibilities.

So I have come here to fulfill my constitutional obligation to report on the state of the Union, and here is my report.

Because the soul of this Nation is strong, because the backbone of this Nation is strong, because the people of this Nation are strong, the state of the Union is strong.

I am not new to this place. I stand here tonight having served as long as about any one of you have ever served here. But I have never been more optimistic about our future, about the future of America. We just have to remember who we are.

We are the United States of America, and there is nothing, nothing beyond our capacity if we do it together.

God bless you all, and may God protect our troops. Thank you.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

At 10 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m., the President of the United States, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The members of the President's Cabinet;

The Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court;

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

JOINT SESSION DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The Chair declares the joint session of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 10 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m., the joint session of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON THE STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the message of the President be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered printed.

The motion was agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.